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Dianne Wampler 11/21/2006 12:35:42 PM From DB/Inbox: Dianne Wampler

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Text:

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 06461

SIPDIS
CX:

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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0006
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 5296
INFO RUEHZG/NATO EU COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0539
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5// PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//JSJ3// PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 006461

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2016
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: HARD-PRESSED TO DO MORE FOR NATO: PREVIEW OF
TURKEY ISSUES FOR RIGA

REF: A. USNATO 000658
[1](#)B. STATE 186256
[1](#)C. ANKARA 6446

Classified By: DCM Nancy McEldowney, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Turkey agrees broadly with U.S. positions on NATO Global Partnership and enlargement, and understands the importance of mission success for NATO in Afghanistan, but is hard-pressed to make a bigger military contribution in Afghanistan than it already is, according to the MFA. Lifting national caveats for Turkish ISAF troops would be very difficult and is unlikely. The Turkish General Staff (TGS) is considering additional contributions to the NATO Response Force (NRF), but has not yet committed. The MFA says the Turkish freeze on defense cooperation with France is strictly bilateral and will not affect NATO operations. End summary.

Broad Agreement on Partnership and Enlargement

[1](#)2. (C) MFA officials have told us in recent days that there is broad Turkish agreement with the U.S. positions on Global partnerships and NATO enlargement. MFA Deputy Director General for NATO Affairs Sadar Kilic stated to us on November 8 that the GOT has given full support to the concept of partnerships, but with the caveat that it does not want new partnerships to have a detrimental effect on existing relationships. On future enlargement, the most contentious prospective new member would be Georgia, whose recent tensions with Russia have raised concerns in Ankara. When

Georgia is eventually admitted and benefits from Article 505 protection, Turkey would expect more "responsible" behavior from Tbilisi. Turkey follows developments in the southern Caucasus quite closely. Deputy Undersecretary for International Security Affairs Rafet Akgunay told us that Turkey does support eventual NATO membership for Georgia, "when the time is right," but that the GOT is against setting a timetable.

Hard-pressed to Contribute More for Afghanistan

13. (C) Turkey understands the importance to NATO of mission success in Afghanistan and has demonstrated its commitment through two solo commands of ISAF (II and VIII); current participation in the two-year joint ISAF Central Command with France and Italy; and the November 9 establishment of Turkey's first Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Wardak Province. Akgunay told us the list of new ISAF equipment requirements being asked of Turkey was currently under review by the TGS, but warned that the GOT will be hard-pressed to make further commitments of troops or equipment, especially aircraft, for Afghanistan. He and others with whom we have pressed this issue have stressed that Turkey's needs at home in the war against the PKK and other requirements elsewhere, including UNIFIL, have stretched the armed forces' resources and make it difficult for Turkey give more to ISAF.

Lifting TU ISAF Caveats "Mission Impossible"

14. (C) Lifting of standing national caveats limiting the patrolling and positioning of Turkish ISAF troops--a point we have underscored at every opportunity--will be very difficult, or "mission impossible," according to Kilic and others. Every MFA official with whom we have raised this issue has told us that the caveats cannot be lifted. Deputy U/S Akgunay told the DCM on November 17 simply that the message had been passed to the TGS, but that he was pessimistic about changes. The caveats, Akgunay noted, were "a fact of life" and very hard for Turkey to change for military and political reasons.

NRF Contributions Possible

15. (C) Akgunay confirmed that the large request being made of Turkey for the NRF was being reviewed by the TGS. There has been no commitment yet, but Kilic and others expressed some hope that there might be agreement Turkey could contribute at least some the of the units needed to make the NRF a real force.

French Freeze Will Not Affect NATO

16. (C) In response to the DCM's question, Deputy U/S Akgunay told us on November 17 that the announced disengagement on military cooperation with France (ref c) had affected bilateral ties only, and would not have an impact on NATO operations in which Turkish forces were working with the French. Akgunay claimed that the new policy, first publicly announced by Land forces Commander General Ilker Basbug November 15, had been coordinated within the GOT, including the MFA at senior levels. France had "a price to pay," Akgunay explained, and whether or not further steps might be considered depended on whether the French assembly's bill becomes law in France.

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